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DIVISION 13
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COMICS' GREATEST WORLD
DIVISION 13
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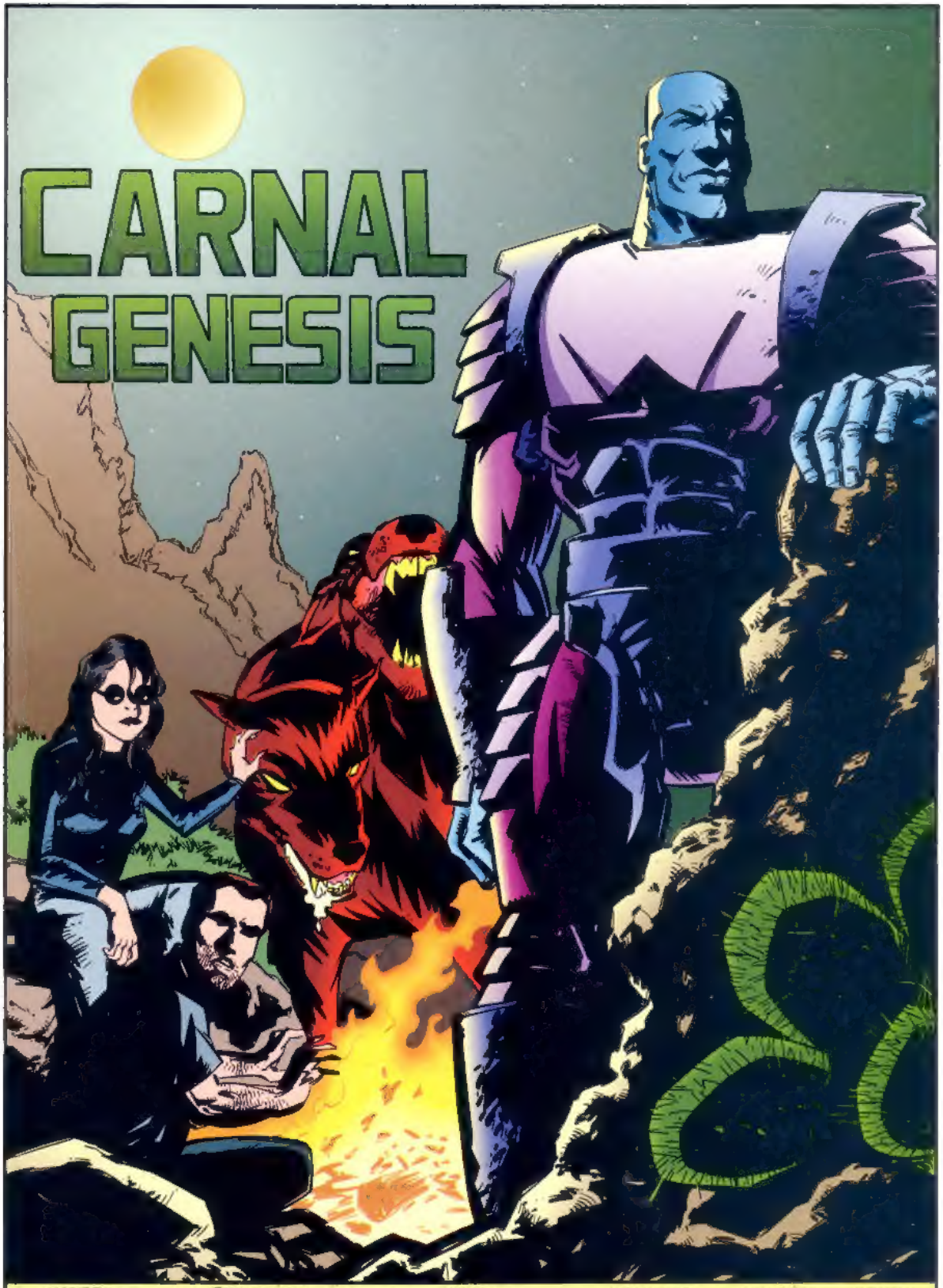

WORDS:	PENCILS:	INKS:	LETTERS:	COLORS:	EDITS:
KEITH GIFFEN	RICHARD CASE & DEAN ZACHARY	MIKE SELLERS & ANDREW PEPOY	VICKIE WILLIAMS	PERRY McNAMEE	MARILEE HORD

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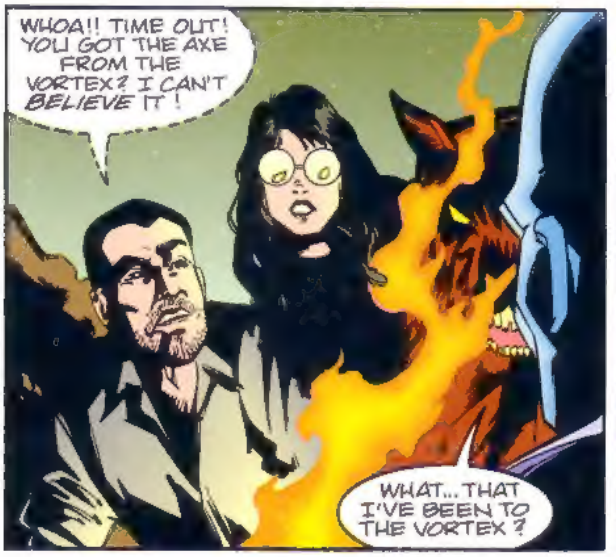
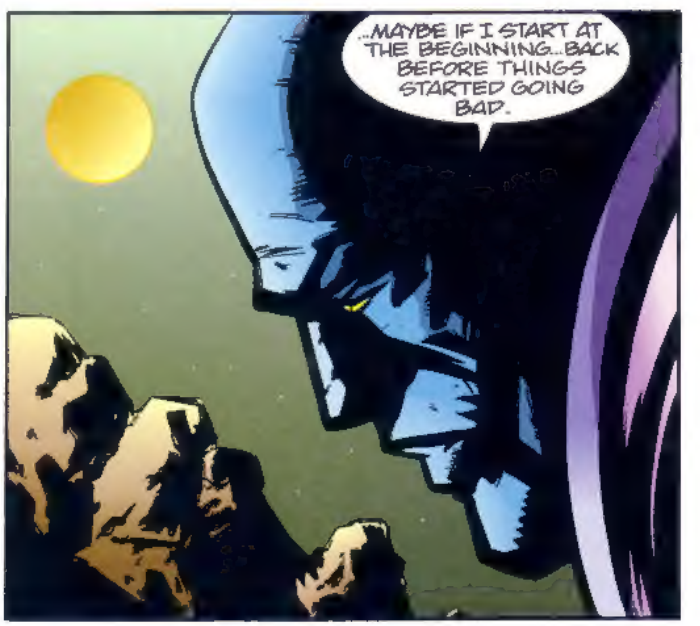
YOU, ahhh... YOU WANNA TALK ABOUT IT?
IT HELPS SOMETIMES... Y'KNOW? sometimes...
...SIGH... SOMETHING, I dunno... SOMETHING HAPPENED.
TELL ME! WHEN AIN'T SOMETHING HAPPENIN' AROUND HERE!
NO... THE AXE, IT... REACHED OUT FOR ME.
I KNOW, SOUNDS CRAZY, DON'T IT?
I'M SITTIN' HERE WITH A THREE-HEADED, FIRE-BREATHING DOG. Y'WANNA TALK CRAZY...

SHOULDA LEFT THE DAMNED THING IN THE VORTEX.


WHOA!! TIME OUT! YOU GOT THE AXE FROM THE VORTEX? I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!
WHAT... THAT I'VE BEEN TO THE VORTEX?

NO!
THAT YOU'RE SURPRISED WHEN THE AXE STARTS ACTING WEIRD! THE VORTEX!! MAN! WHYN'T Y'JUST LEAVE IT THERE?!!
it was mine...

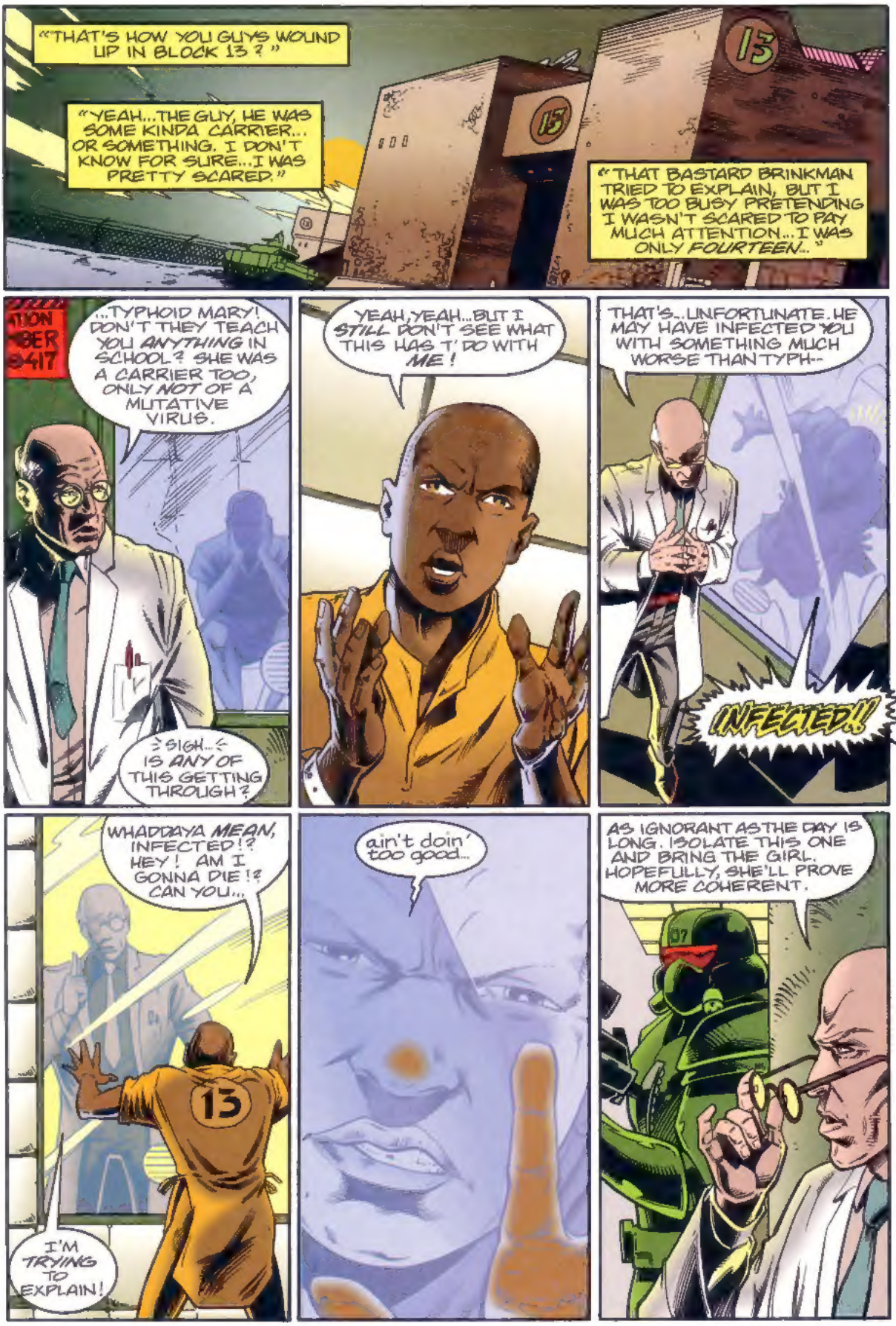

...MAYBE IF I START AT THE BEGINNING...BACK BEFORE THINGS STARTED GOING BAD.

NOT THAT CINNABAR FLATS WAS ANY GREAT SHAKES BEFORE THE VORTEX SHOWED UP, BUT HELL, YOU KNEW THAT.
AIN'T MUCH TO OCCUPY A KID IN CINNABAR, UNLESS YOU'RE INTO... WELL... WHAT I WAS INTO, I GUESS.
IT WAS JUST FOR KICKS, Y'KNOW? SNATCH THE BAG, RACE AROUND THE BLOCK, 'N CHUCK IT AT THE BABE FROM BEHIND. I NEVER TOOK NO MONEY OR ANYTHING...
...IT WAS JUST STUPID KID STUFF.
A'COURSE, NOT EVERYBODY SAW IT THAT WAY.
oh... um... H'LO, OFFICER FRANK.
SIGH! WHAT AM I GOING TO DO WITH YOU, TERRY?

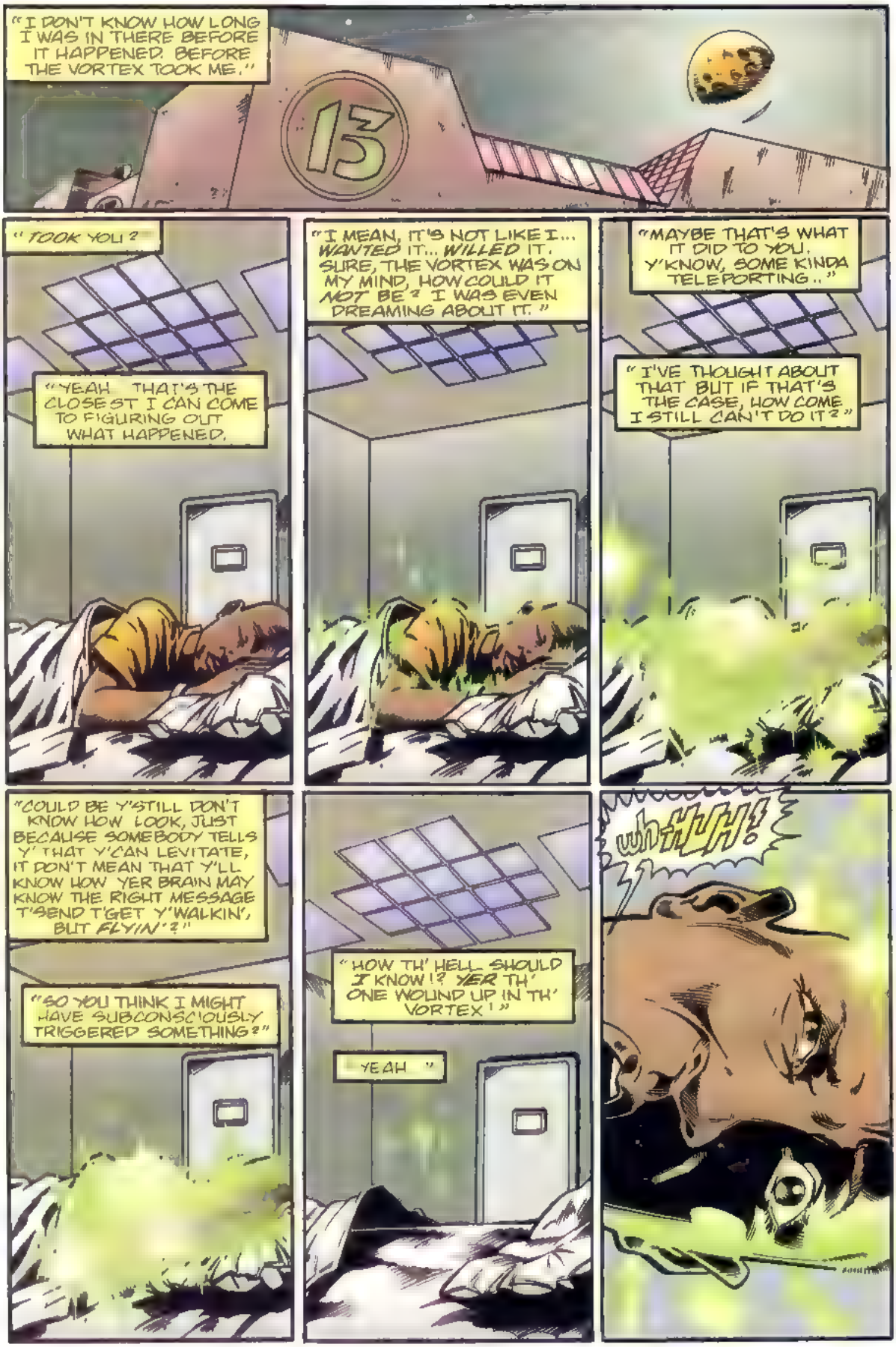
HEY, IT WAS JUST A JOKE, Y'KNOW? I WAS BEIN' INITIATED! YEAH, INTO A CLUB, OR SOMETHIN'!
uh-huh.
awww... C'MON! I WAS GONNA GIVE IT BACK. HONEST.
uh-huh.
'S DRUG MONEY, MAN! SHE'S A DEALER! AIN'T NO CRIME IN TAKIN'...
SHUT... UP!
MY PURSE!
FINALLY A POLICE OFFICER AROUND WHEN YOU NEED ONE.
WE TRY, MA'AM.
YOU SHOULD BE ASHAMED OF YOURSELF!
Y'WANNA JUST RUN ME IN? AIN'T LIKE I AIN'T HEARD THIS BEFORE.
YEE-OW!

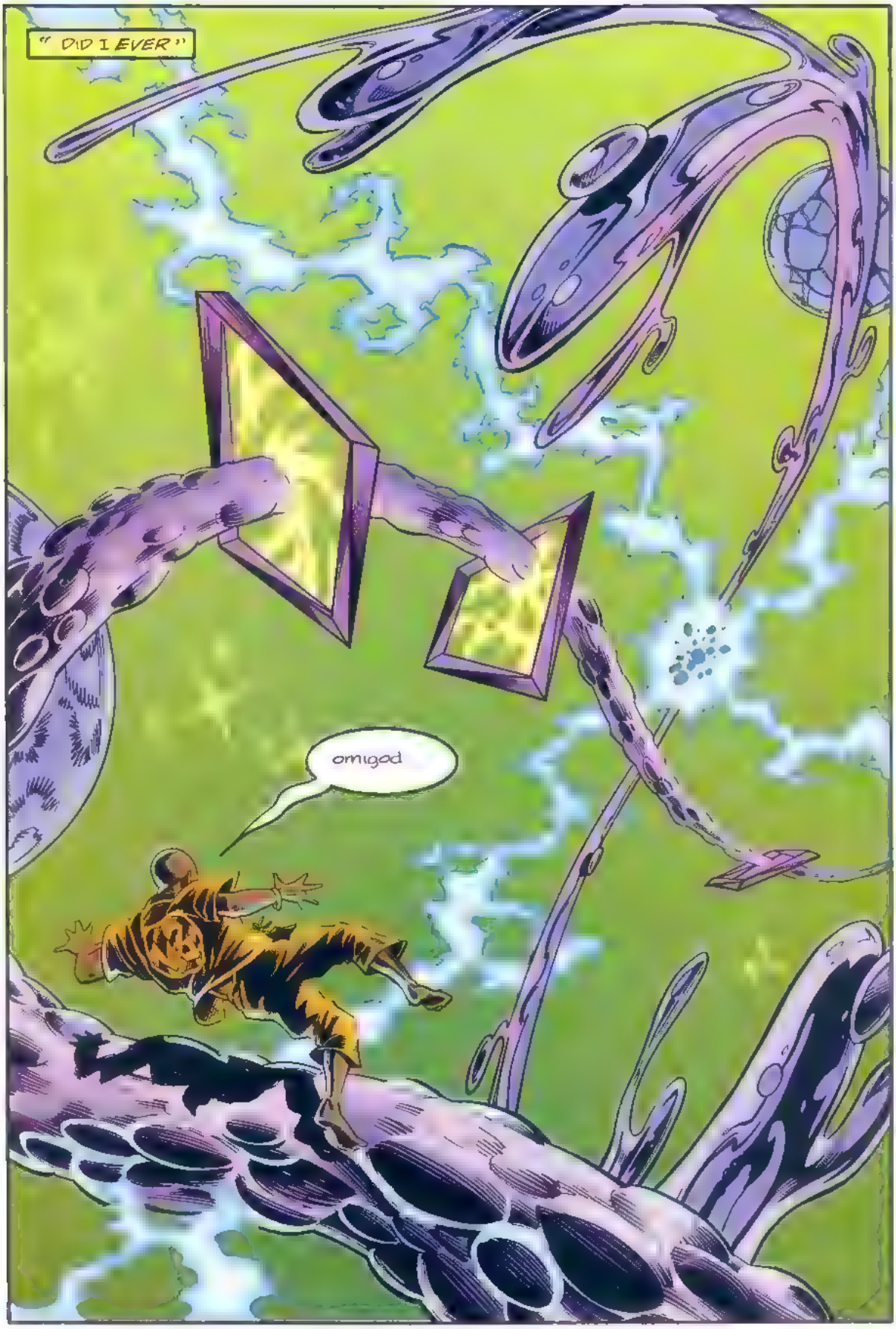
THAT'S JAYWALKIN', MAN! GO GET 'M OFFICER! I'LL WAIT HERE 'N' PROTECT TH'...
I THOUGHT I TOLD YOU TO SHUT UP!
HEY...
HEY!
!?!
SKREEE
'S NOT MY FAULT... I DIDN'T DO NUTHIN'! 'S NOT MY--
CHUDDA CHUDDA CHUDDA

BLAST...
CONTROL? WE MIGHT HAVE A PROBLEM HERE. THREE PROBABLE CONTACTS, ONE OF THEM'S A COP.
NOT ANYMORE.
UNDERSTOOD.

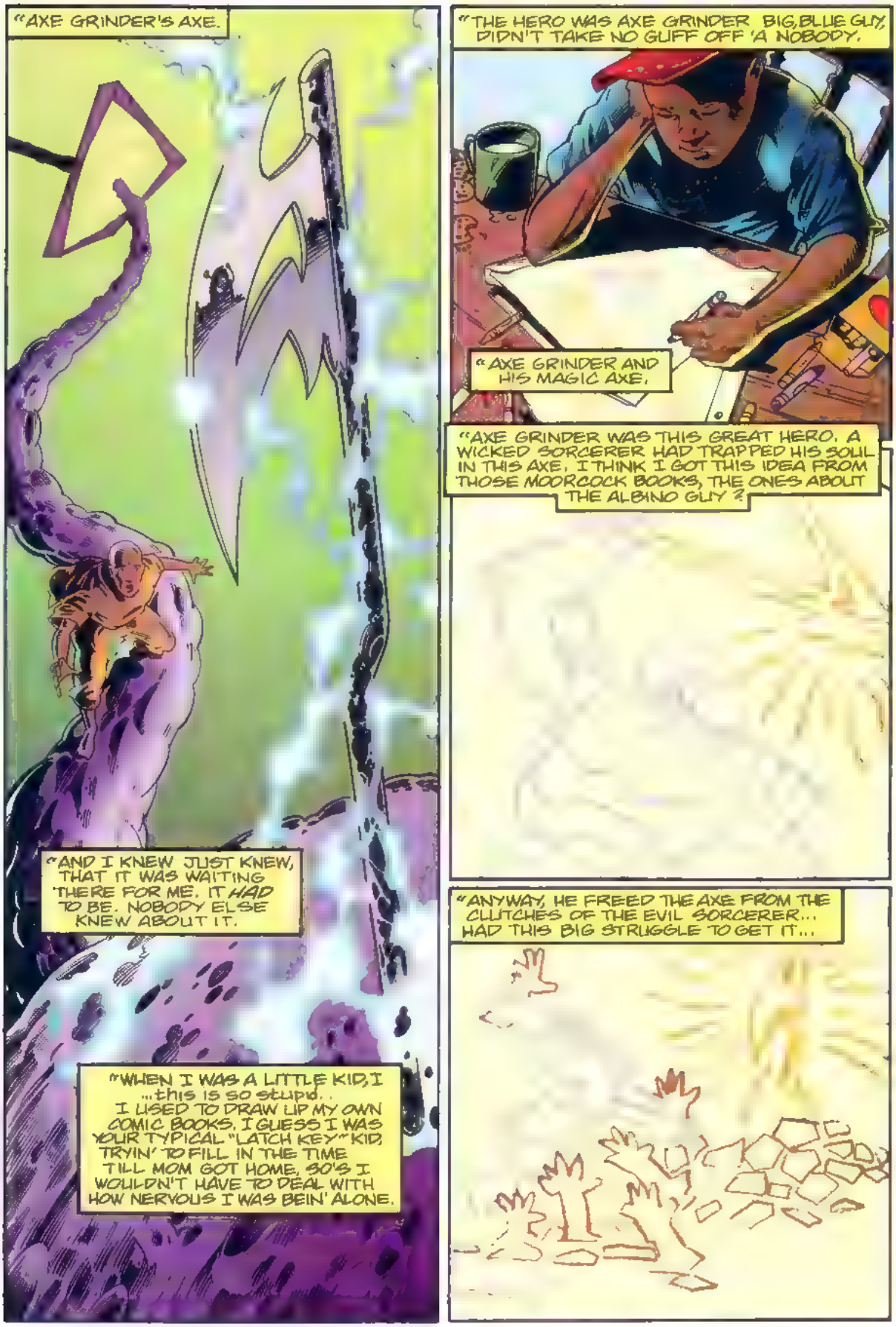

"THAT'S HOW YOU GUYS WOUND UP IN BLOCK 13?"
"YEAH...THE GUY, HE WAS SOME KINDA CARRIER... OR SOMETHING. I DON'T KNOW FOR SURE...I WAS PRETTY SCARED."
"THAT BASTARD BRINKMAN TRIED TO EXPLAIN, BUT I WAS TOO BUSY PRETENDING I WASN'T SCARED TO PAY MUCH ATTENTION...I WAS ONLY FOURTEEN..."
13
...TYPHOID MARY! DON'T THEY TEACH YOU ANYTHING IN SCHOOL? SHE WAS A CARRIER TOO, ONLY NOT OF A MUTATIVE VIRUS.
SIGH... IS ANY OF THIS GETTING THROUGH?
YEAH, YEAH...BUT I STILL DON'T SEE WHAT THIS HAS T' DO WITH ME!
THAT'S..UNFORTUNATE. HE MAY HAVE INFECTED YOU WITH SOMETHING MUCH WORSE THAN TYPH--
INFECTED!!
WHADDAYA MEAN, INFECTED!? HEY! AM I GONNA DIE!? CAN YOU...
I'M TRYING TO EXPLAIN!
ain't doin' too good...
AS IGNORANT AS THE DAY IS LONG. ISOLATE THIS ONE AND BRING THE GIRL. HOPEFULLY, SHE'LL PROVE MORE COHERENT.

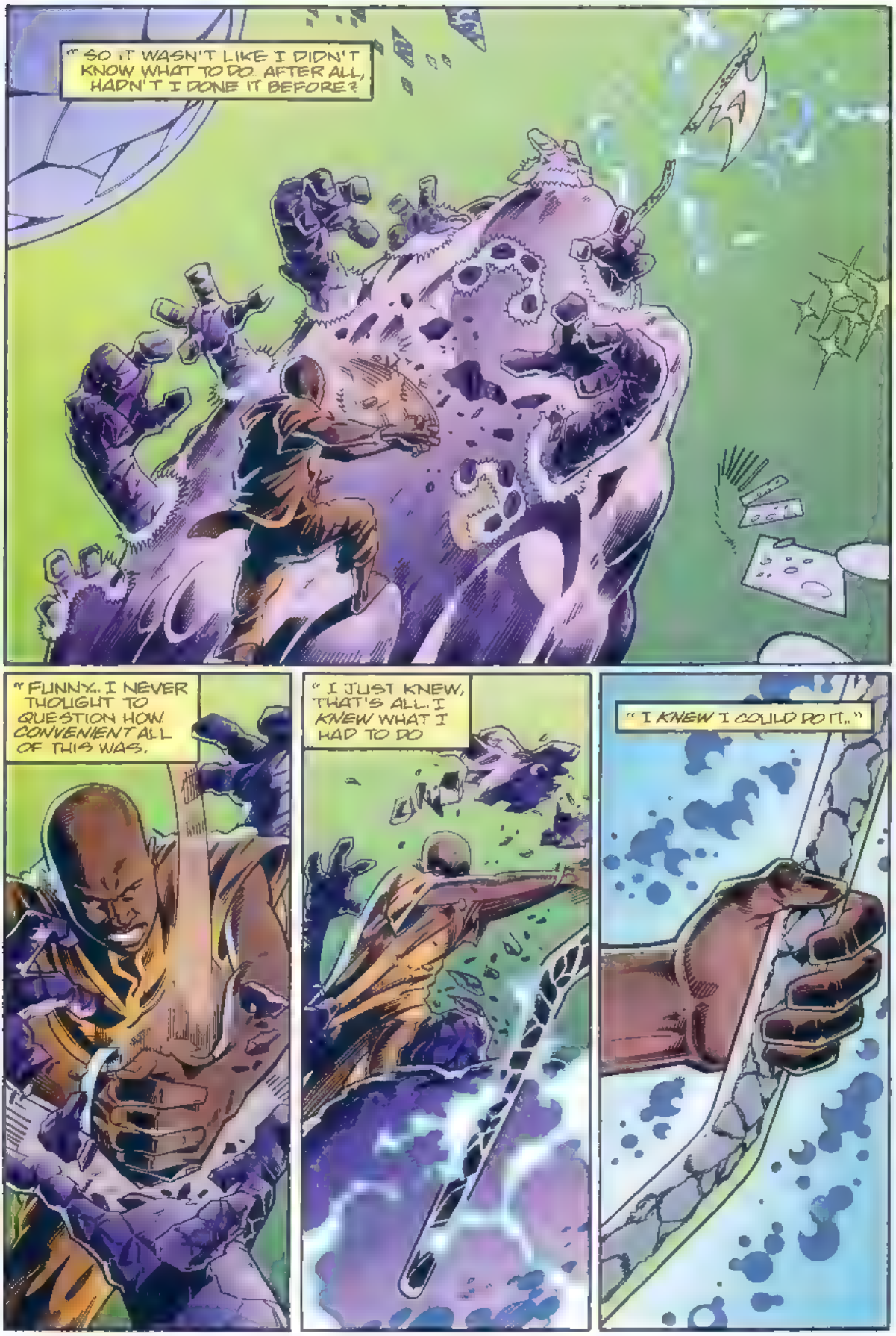
"BRINKMAN PRETTY MUCH LOST INTEREST IN ME AFTER THAT. I GUESS I WASN'T WORTH HIS TIME UNTIL I GREW A SECOND HEAD, OR... MELTED... OR WHATEVER... "
HEY! HEY YOU!
WHAT'S GOIN' ON!? WHY AIN'T I SEEN NO DOCTOR!!?
AM I SICK OR WHAT!? HEY!!! #@*#!

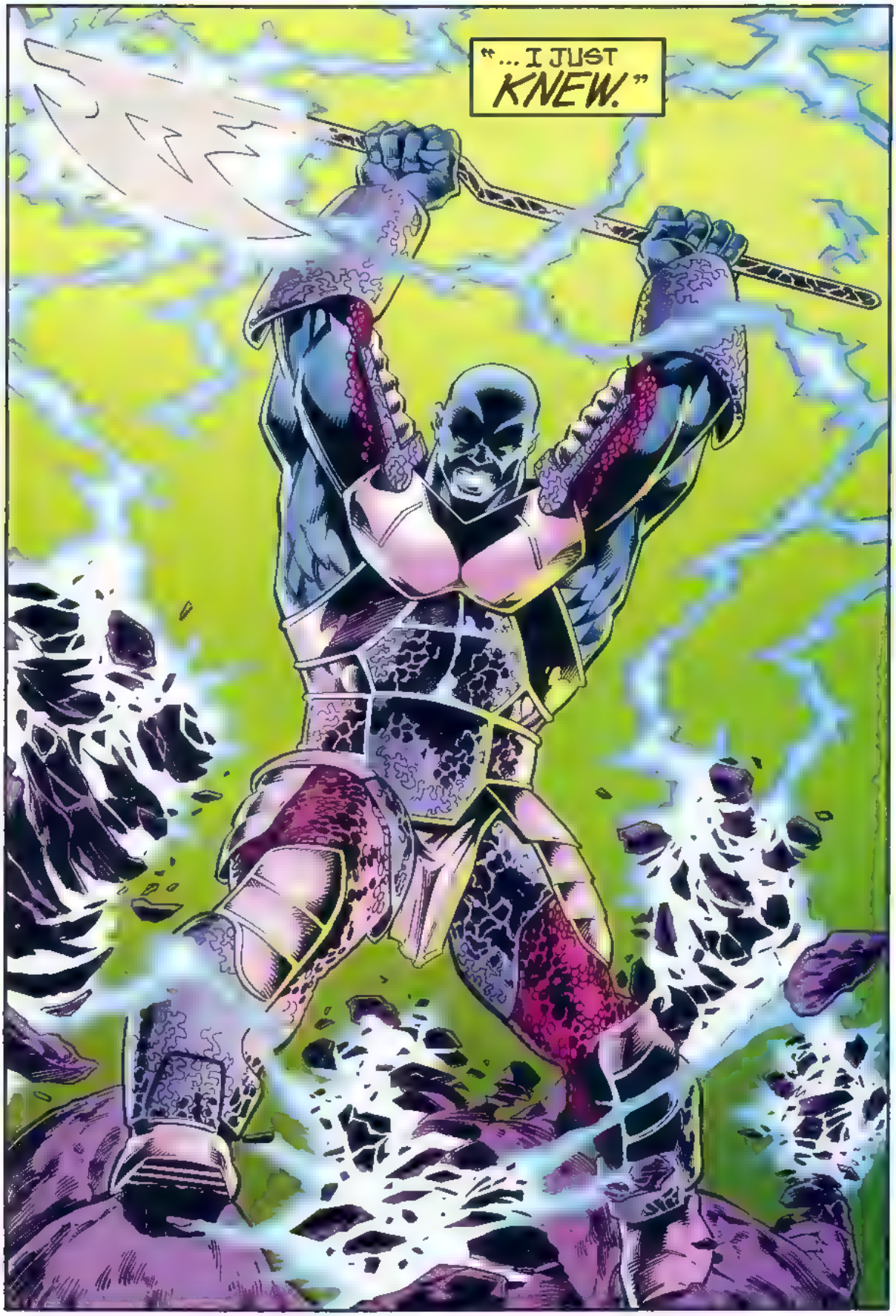

"I DON'T KNOW HOW LONG I WAS IN THERE BEFORE IT HAPPENED. BEFORE THE VORTEX TOOK ME."
13
"...TOOK YOU?"
"YEAH... THAT'S THE CLOSEST I CAN COME TO FIGURING OUT WHAT HAPPENED.
"I MEAN, IT'S NOT LIKE I... WANTED IT... WILLED IT. SURE, THE VORTEX WAS ON MY MIND, HOW COULD IT NOT BE? I WAS EVEN DREAMING ABOUT IT."
"MAYBE THAT'S WHAT IT DID TO YOU. Y'KNOW, SOME KINDA TELEPORTING.."
"I'VE THOUGHT ABOUT THAT BUT IF THAT'S THE CASE, HOW COME I STILL CAN'T DO IT?"
"COULD BE Y'STILL DON'T KNOW HOW LOOK, JUST BECAUSE SOMEBODY TELLS Y' THAT Y'CAN LEVITATE, IT DON'T MEAN THAT Y'LL KNOW HOW YER BRAIN MAY KNOW THE RIGHT MESSAGE T'SEND T'GET Y'WALKIN', BUT FLYIN'?"
"SO YOU THINK I MIGHT HAVE SUBCONSCIOUSLY TRIGGERED SOMETHING?"
"HOW TH' HELL SHOULD I KNOW!? YER TH' ONE WOUND UP IN TH' VORTEX!"
YEAH."
whUH!


" DID I EVER "
omigod

MAN, THIS IS GIVIN' ME TH' CREEPS ! WHAT WUZ IT LIKE IN THERE ?
TO ME ?
YEAH, TO YOU ! WHO ELSE ?!
right.. IT'S JUST I THINK YOU'D GET A DIFFERENT ANSWER FROM ANYBODY ELSE WHO'D BEEN
Y'SEE, IT WAS JUST LIKE I'D ALWAYS IMAGINED A PLACE LIKE THAT WOULD BE, LIKE IN THOSE DR DIMENSION COMICS..
IT WAS TOO PERSONAL
I THINK, MAYBE, IT MANIFESTS ITSELF TO MEET WITH YOUR EXPECTATIONS
hell will you listen to me
HOW LONG WERE YOU IN IT ?
DUNNO. I DON'T THINK TIME S THE SAME THERE
I JUST.. WANDERED AROUND SCARED CRIED A LOT
THEN I SAW T


"AXE GRINDER'S AXE.
"AND I KNEW JUST KNEW, THAT IT WAS WAITING THERE FOR ME. IT HAD TO BE. NOBODY ELSE KNEW ABOUT IT.
"WHEN I WAS A LITTLE KID, I ...this is so stupid... I USED TO DRAW UP MY OWN COMIC BOOKS. I GUESS I WAS YOUR TYPICAL "LATCH KEY" KID, TRYIN' TO FILL IN THE TIME TILL MOM GOT HOME, SO'S I WOULDN'T HAVE TO DEAL WITH HOW NERVOUS I WAS BEIN' ALONE.
"THE HERO WAS AXE GRINDER. BIG, BLUE GUY, DIDN'T TAKE NO GUFF OFF 'A NOBODY.
"AXE GRINDER AND HIS MAGIC AXE.
"AXE GRINDER WAS THIS GREAT HERO. A WICKED SORCERER HAD TRAPPED HIS SOUL IN THIS AXE. I THINK I GOT THIS IDEA FROM THOSE MOORCOCK BOOKS, THE ONES ABOUT THE ALBINO GUY?
"ANYWAY, HE FREED THE AXE FROM THE CLUTCHES OF THE EVIL SORCERER... HAD THIS BIG STRUGGLE TO GET IT...

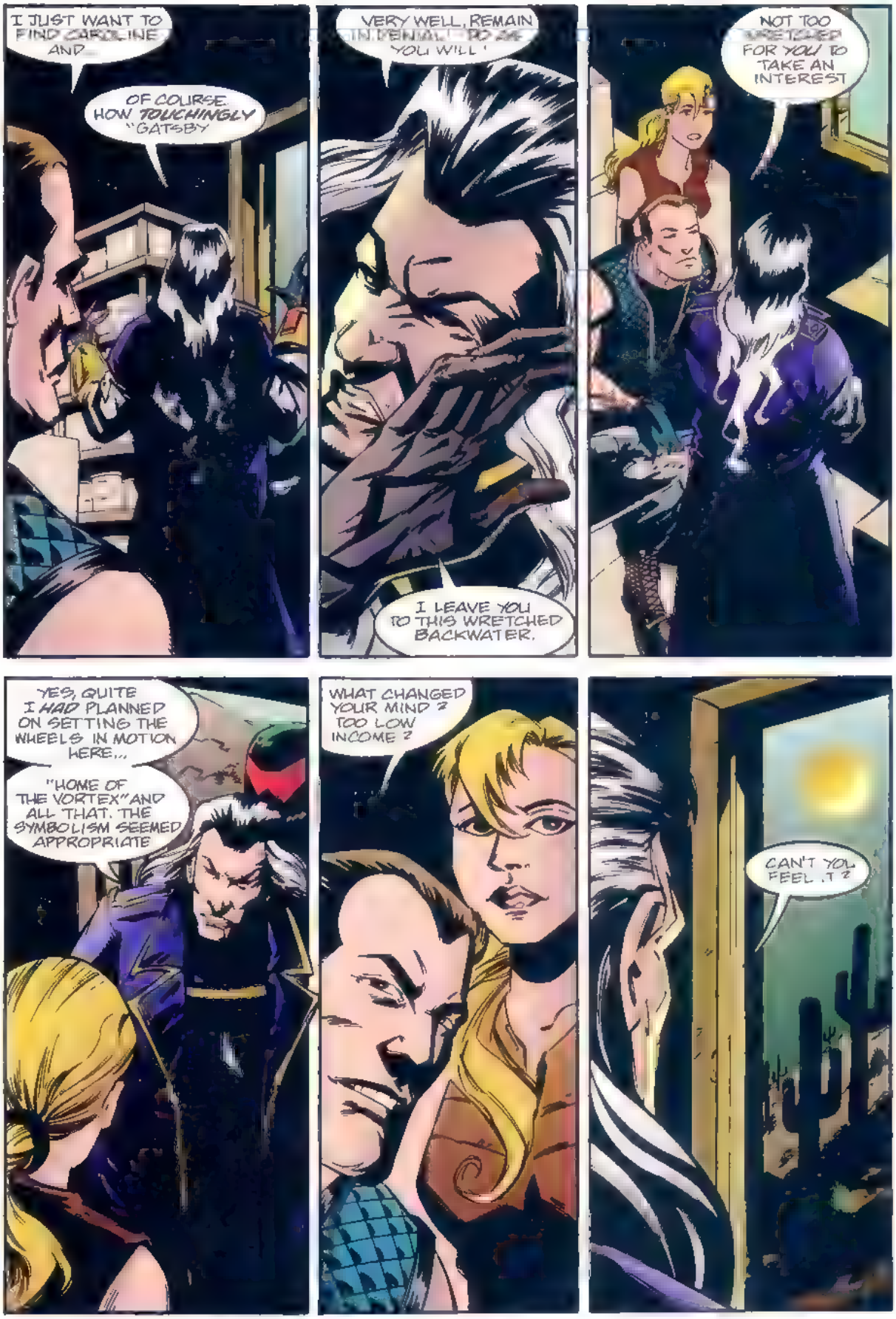

" SO IT WASN'T LIKE I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO. AFTER ALL, HADN'T I DONE IT BEFORE?
" FUNNY.. I NEVER THOUGHT TO QUESTION HOW CONVENIENT ALL OF THIS WAS.
" I JUST KNEW, THAT'S ALL. I KNEW WHAT I HAD TO DO
" I KNEW I COULD DO IT.. "


"... I JUST KNEW."

"THAT'S WHEN I WOKE UP."
wh-HUH?
"I THINK I WAS ABOUT HALFWAY THROUGH ONE OF THOSE 'THANK YOU GOD, IT WAS ONLY A NIGHTMARE' RAPS, WHEN IT HIT ME."
AAAARRRGGHH!
I GUESS I WENT KINDA BERSERK
I GUESS YOU HAD REASON TO.
SO, HOW'D YOU HOOK UP WITH LAMB'N.?
I umm I DON'T WANNA TALK ABOUT THIS NO MORE, OKAY?

WAIT! ONE MORE QUESTION, JUST ONE.
Y'STILL HAVEN'T TOLD ME WHAT HAPPENED TO YA BACK THERE
IT. THEY... SOMETHING TRIED TO TAKE ME.
WHAT, I BACK INTO TH VORTEX 2
NO, TAKE CONTROL OF ME SOMETHING IN THE AXE no, that's not right
I THINK I BROUGHT SOMETHING BACK WITH ME, WITH THE AXE
IT TRIED TO GET INSIDE ME..
. WHEN IT COULDN'T IT KINDA LEFT
LEFT 2 LEFT TO WHERE 12
oh

ELSEWHERE
YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS!
CAN'T I? THIS GOVERNMENT'S INSTITUTIONALIZED PERSECUTION OF THE VORTEX ENHANCED WILL NEVER END UNLESS BOLD, DECISIVE MEASURES ARE TAKEN!
IF THE BURDEN OF LEADERSHIP FALLS ON ME, SO BE IT!
WHY SHARE ALL OF THIS WITH ME?
I SHOULD THINK IT OBVIOUS! WE'RE QUITE ALIKE.
OH? AND WHAT WERE YOU PLANNING ON DOING ONCE YOU'D, ahhh... "GATHERED YOUR FLOCK"?
LEAD THEM, PERHAPS?
hmm... FOR THEIR OWN GOOD, I'M SURE.
YOU SEE? I'VE SIMPLY COME TO GRIPS WITH MY AMBITIONS SOONER THAN YOU, eh?


I JUST WANT TO FIND CAROLINE AND...
OF COURSE. HOW TOUCHINGLY "GATSBY
VERY WELL, REMAIN IN DENIAL IF YOU WISH!
I LEAVE YOU TO THIS WRETCHED BACKWATER.
NOT TOO WRETCHED FOR YOU TO TAKE AN INTEREST
YES, QUITE I HAD PLANNED ON SETTING THE WHEELS IN MOTION HERE...
"HOME OF THE VORTEX" AND ALL THAT. THE SYMBOLISM SEEMED APPROPRIATE
WHAT CHANGED YOUR MIND? TOO LOW INCOME?
CAN'T YOU FEEL IT?

THE VORTEX... IT'S NOT FINISHED WITH CINNABAR YET.
I'M AFRAID IT'S WORKING ON THE ECOSYSTEM NOW. WE WERE JUST THE BEGINNING.
IT'S NOTHING, IF NOT AMBITIOUS.
THERE'S A GROWING... AWARENESS. A... WELL... SENTIENCE, FOR LACK OF A BETTER WORD.
A BALEFUL SENTIENCE.
I PREFER THE PATH OF LEAST RESISTANCE.
DEALING WITH THE SAPIENS WILL BE QUITE ENOUGH.
THIS TOWN IS YOURS. DO WITH IT AS YOU WILL.
IF IT WILL LET YOU.
I'VE GREATER MATTERS TO SEE TO.
DO STAY IN TOUCH.

SSHHHMMMMMMMMM
FRANK?
LET'S GO.
FRANK, WHAT HE SAID... ABOUT YOU...
LET'S GO.

CINNABAR FLATS.
STOP!!
STOP MAKING STARINGS!!
STOP MAKING STARINGS! STOP! STOP! STOP!
NO MORE STARINGS! NO MORE!
HATES IT!
HATES IT LIKE HATES THE LAMB... FINDING THE LAMB AND MAKE STARINGS ON... MAKE THE LAMB HATING IT... THEN...
oh yes... then...

SUBDIVISIONS 4

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TOP SECRET

JOURNAL ENTRY: Sept. 4

Our encounter with the thing that called itself Law continues to disturb me. Although cloaked in human form, the essence of its true nature was palpable enough to trigger a gag reflex that took all of my willpower to work around. Even Flux seemed to sense on some level that something was radically wrong, but seemed more disoriented by it than appalled. She still won't talk about our encounter with Law, but I wonder if her reluctance has more to do with the message than with the messenger.

The axe bio-degraded on the ride back to the campsite. I don't think we'll ever be able to scrub the stench from the van. Time to hunt down more transport.

Bad news at camp. Optic gone missing, the dog with her. Voxx beside himself with worry. Just what I need, another basket case.

JOURNAL ENTRY: Sept. 8

Law was right. Cinnabar is going bad. Voxx has logged at least seven lifeforms that shouldn't exist outside of an H.P. Lovecraft story. It seems that every third house has a for sale sign out front. The hunt for Block 13 escapees continues, but we're just going through the motions.

Grisly discovery. Five bodies burned near cinders. Impossible to tell if one might be Optic. Voxx refuses to even entertain the idea.

Terry won't snap out of it. I may have to seriously consider leaving him behind.

JOURNAL ENTRY: Sept. 15

I've forgotten her name, isn't that funny? Over a year of obsessive searching and I've forgotten her name. Something in the air, perhaps? Why not, there seems to be something in everything else. This town... it just takes the heart out of you. I think maybe we should leave. Gone bad. All gone bad.

JOURNAL ENTRY: Sept. 16

Can't leave. Too late. It won't let us.
I think her name was Catherine...

Internal Memo
Agent alert

The following entries were found during a recent raid upon the former residence of Frank Lamb, leader of the escapees from Block 13. These files confirm that the fugitive Lamb is still active, though attempts to locate him via these modem transactions have failed.

This information is considered highly sensitive and should be filed appropriately.